



Minutes of the Eton Community Association Meeting on Wednesday, 11th December 2024 at the Christopher Hotel

Attendees: Ros Rivaz, Leonie Bryant, Christine Barber, Malcolm Leech, Stewart Rogers, Teresa Read, Ian Read, Katherine Blightman, Michael Blightman, Elizabeth McMahon, Hardip Virdee, Amanda Snell, Hugo Snell, Katherine Rogers, Dawn Palmieri, Monaliza Cadwallader, Barbara France, Peter Eaton, Simon Carpenter, Kim Carpenter, Dawn Lee, Bryn Lee, Celia Harvey, John Harvey, Moira Butcher, John Butcher, Bridget Bartlett, Ben Willcox, Cllr Devon Davies, Anthony Cove, David Waddleton, Shirley Young, Annie Anderson, Graeme Read (Mgr The Christopher), Cllr Julian Tisi, Amanda Street, Sylvia Ellis.

Apologies: Stephen Gosnell, Julia Gosnell, Maggie Waller, Cllr Mark Wilson, David Palmieri, Thames Valley Police.

1 Welcome & Apologies

- i. Welcome to all, and thank you to the Christopher Hotel for the Christmas drinks and canapés.

2 Minutes & matters arising

- i. Eton Information Centre continues to ask for volunteers with fund-raising skills. Some have already volunteered. Please contact Bryn/Ros (chairman@etoncommunity.co.uk) if you can help.
- ii. Côte are not the only business in the High Street with early deliveries. Please let RR know your views on whether we should tackle this early morning noise as a more general issue.

3 Chair's Report

- i. Bridge lighting: the corner lantern light near the Christopher Wren Hotel is now working. The lights have now been fixed with a brand-new transformer; the balustrading lights are now on a timed process.
- ii. Eton Town Council have been told that after Christmas, there will be a place to leave real Christmas trees, but no confirmation yet as to where. Should be Eton Court car park – tbc.
- iii. RBWM are aware of the atrocious state of greenery and are trying to sort out how to control this. Please feedback your thoughts through secretary@etoncommunity.co.uk, or there is a limited online survey which can be filled in to report.
- iv. There has been concern about Article 4 enabling change of use of High Street properties from shops and offices to housing. Applications are unlikely to succeed in Eton due to

the lack of a dry escape route to the bridge in the event of flooding.

- v. The Christmas Café (most recently The Rancher) is temporary while the owners consider longer term plans.
- vi. No opening date yet for Cappadocia, but it will be in the New Year.
- vii. Repairs to the Cockpit roof are almost complete. Scaffolding may come down in January, but March is more likely. Planning to be off-site middle of 2025. There will be another planning application going in retaining shops, but preferring residential to Airbnb.

4 Treasurer's Report

- i. Good financial health thanks to sponsorship from Eton College, Eton Town Council and the Baldwin Bridge Trust for the recent Christmas event. Also, excellent management of the Christmas event and donations from traders and residents. Thanks to Ben Willcox, Stephen Gosnell and Paul Roach for orchestrating this.

5 Thames Valley Police

- i. Presented on their behalf due to unavailability, apologies were sent in advance.
- ii. A shoplifter has been prosecuted. Shout Out newsletter will have information on how to report suspicious activity.
- iii. The bicycle patrols have been very successful. The Operation will be renamed from Operation Lycra. Police plan to repeat this operation every month and welcome photos of them doing this – please send photos to chairman@etoncommunity.co.uk
- iv. A resident asked if results of prosecutions can be published -

<https://www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/Alerts/A/206863/Operation-LYCRA>

Matthew Barber PCC - <https://matthewbarber.co.uk/>

6 Councillor Matters

- i. Bridge balustrade lights timing not fixed yet. (However, we think this might now be resolved as well as the lantern light).
- ii. The One-Way sign will stay as is to tell cyclists which way to go when coming over the bridge from Windsor, as this is deemed adequate.
- iii. Cannot have a balanced budget this year, partly due to council taxes for previous years not having increased. Increasing social care costs add to this problem. Plan is to get permission to sell off assets and for this coming year to increase council tax by 25%. This is to cover the backlog of money needed. There is an option of a government loan to bridge the gap while the 25% increase takes effect. We need more revenue.
- iv. A 25% increase will impact people in need.
- v. A resident reports that food drops to larger properties are increasing – partly due to job losses.

Action: next Shout Out to include a link on how to apply for food bank or similar RR

- vi. You can apply to reduce your water bill. There isn't an equivalent option for electricity,

nor for gas. Following the recent gas outage, some have received the rebate, but others haven't.

- vii. A resident asked how many public charging points there are in Eton and in Windsor for electric cars. The charging points in Pockocks Lane are for the College only. Those in Windsor Bridge Court are also not public. We were offered charging points for the Meadow Lane car park, but RBWM would not provide the necessary cabling. RBWM have applied for a grant for charging points. There was a lost opportunity when replacing lampposts which could have included charging points.

Action: find out how many public charging points there are in Windsor **Cllr Mark Wilson/RR**

7 Business Information Update

- i. Graeme Read, Manager from The Christopher Hotel reminds us that the hotel can organise booked social events, has bookable accommodation including over Christmas, and has a bar that is open to the public. ECA thanked them for hosting us this evening.

8 Eton Information Centre update including the Windsor and Eton Business Partnership

Eton Information Centre

- i. Monday, 16th December to Wednesday, 15th January - a Dick Whittington competition for children to find cats in windows is running.
- ii. EIC Ball on Saturday, 22nd March at the Castle Hotel. Tables of 12. Live and DJ music, auctions and Casino tables, £75 per person.
- iii. Engraved bricks – there are 120 bricks, application form is available for you to apply – closing date is 31st March. The existing bricks from a previous order will be cleaned.

Windsor & Eton Business Partnership

- i. Footfall in Eton shows 2.1 million people over the bridge to end of November, an increase of 29.4%. Count triggered by people's electronic devices, each counted only once. Visitors aren't necessarily going into our shops.
- ii. 7 out of 71 shops are empty (which is a lower percentage empty than in Windsor).
- iii. Usage of car parks is down since last meeting's data. Discussion as to whether this is seasonal or due to increase in car park charges; Councillors are considering dynamic pricing i.e. lower in winter. Present data when it is next available. **BL**
- iv. Cadent are continuing to dig up roads putting in bleeder valves as there is still water in the system. No further information has been established by Cllrs related to compensation for businesses.

Action: ask whether any more compensation available for businesses **Cllr Mark Wilson**

- v. No updates on the new dentist who may be replacing the former Eton Stationers
Action: check what is happening **RR**
- vi. Advantage card entry to Windsor Castle free until the end of the year, then entry will be chargeable with a discount. Royal calendar in 2025 in Windsor is busy due to continued works being carried out at Buckingham Palace.

- vii. Still looking to improve the signage in Windsor to get to Eton.
- viii. The Living Advent calendar for this year has started with events running from 18:15 to 18:30 <https://www.etoncommunity.co.uk/post/the-living-advent-calendar>

9 Events

- i. Next litter pick will be in February with the date published in Shout Out once confirmed.
- ii. Next pub walk will be from April onwards.
- iii. About 10 hands were raised when asked about another curry evening.
Action: organise a curry evening at the Golden Curry on a Wednesday RR
- iv. When Cappadocia opens, they may include an event for us via ECA.
- v. Please email secretary@etoncommunity.co.uk if interested in next year's annual ECA Christmas Dinner get-together which usually happens around November/December. Numbers are limited to 30 people.
- vi. Jack Rankin (our MP) wants to attend an ECA meeting.
Action: book Jack Rankin for a 5-minute talk, to be followed by 15 minutes Q&A RR
- vii. Connections with the College are improving, with further invites to events in 2025.

10 AOB

- i. ML reports that the rubbish by the South Meadow Lane pavilion near the playground will be removed. The pavilion should have been emptied before the contractors started renovations but wasn't.
- ii. The position of Town Clerk is still open whilst we replace Bob Austen who has done an excellent job.
- iii. Bryn has copies of "Christmas in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead", please contact him if you need an additional copy.
- iv. Happy Christmas to all who attended and see you in the new year!

Please e-mail AOB for next meeting to secretary@etoncommunity.co.uk.